Outcomes Assessment in the Accreditation Process

By

Dr. Wanda E. Gill

Bowie State University
Bowie, Maryland 20715

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About the Author: Wanda E. Gill, Ed.D., former Associate Director of the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education, is currently employed by the U.S. Department of Education in the Office of Innovation and Improvement and is on loan to Bowie State University in Bowie, Maryland. Dr. Gill holds the Ed.D. from George Washington University, the M.Ed. from Bowie State University, the M.A. degree from the University of Cincinnati and the B.S. degree from Virginia State University.

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Abstract

Regional accreditation is an important and viable way for institutions to regulate themselves through standards development and their attainment as examined through peer review. Cycles of accreditation are useful in comparing and contrasting overall institutional effectiveness over time and against mutually agreed upon parameters.

In the past 15 years, regional accrediting agencies have placed an increased emphasis on student outcomes as one of many measures of how well the institution is fulfilling its mission. This paper examines the status of outcomes assessments in the accreditation processes of the regional accrediting associations.

The following questions were posed and answered as a result of this research:

- *What do research studies tell us about the use of outcomes assessment in the accreditation process?*
- *What are the areas of agreement among regional accrediting agencies on outcomes assessments?*
- *What resources do regional accrediting agencies use to support outcomes assessments in the accreditation process?*
- *What areas could benefit more from an analysis of outcomes assessments but are currently somewhat limited?*

Research studies tell us that the goal of using outcomes assessments to determine the institution's mission and goal fulfillment is still evolving for most institutions. The goal of capacity building as a result of outcomes assessments is far off. More planned intermittent research is needed at all levels of the academy, community colleges, 4 year institutions, and universities to differentiate the components of assessments that are useful at each level.

Questions posed as a result of outcomes assessment in the accreditation process include those related to budget development and expenditures, academic program viability, and student focused institutional planning and development.

Areas that could benefit more from an analysis of outcomes assessments but are currently somewhat limited include student affairs data analysis including surveys on student participation in tutoring and campus activities, work study program participation, and outcomes assessments findings from federally funded student affairs programs. There is little evidence in the literature that outcomes assessments are being used to improve the curriculum, or change curricular direction to make it more in line with institutional mission. There is evidence that policy issues in accreditation are greatly affected by federal legislation.

Introduction

Accreditation continues to be in the spotlight as the federal government and states emphasize more accountability and transparency in the process. With the pending reauthorization of the Higher Education Act ("College Access and Opportunity Act of 2006) and the following approved amendments passed on Thursday, March 30, 2006,[1] Congress is moving to get the legislation through both houses this year.

- Souder (R-Indiana) - Amendment #6 - removes language in the bill that prohibits schools from denying transfer credit based solely on the accreditation of the sending institution;
- Gohmert (R-Texas)- Amendment #2 (by a vote of 418-2) – strikes the reporting requirements for colleges and universities (section 131(f) of the HEA, as it would be amended by the bill. The amendment also strikes section 495 (a)(1) of the bill (amending section 496(a)(1) of the bill (amending section 496 (a)(3) of the HEA, which would allow states to apply to the Secretary of Education to become recognized accreditors.

Congressional interest in accreditation has been well documented in the Chronicle of Higher Education by Bollag[2] who indicates a more widespread view towards transparency and openness in the accreditation process. The interest seems to be escalating, even in years when the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is not at issue.

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation is well aware of the trends towards more transparency and accountability in the process. In a 2005 article in Change[3], Eaton, Fryshman, Hope, Scanlon and Crow pose and answer the question of whether accreditation can disclose without doing damage, given pledges of confidentiality as institutions share with peers and colleagues their planning, budget, daily operations policies, processes and procedures for review, comment, and actions. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has designed a Web-based program of disclosure in hopes of providing the public and policy makers with reassurances that transparency can coexist with credibility.

In the United States, accrediting agencies are private entities, some of which are recognized by the United States Department of Education (ED). ED maintains a publicly accessible website indicating national accrediting agencies that they recognize. This website enables the public to determine which private groups are recognized.

While there are many functions of accreditation, primary selected functions include:

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[1] From the Congressional Record, March 30, 2006.
[2] From "Congress Stops Giving Heartburn to Accreditors" by Bollag, Burton in the Chronicle of Higher Education 12/9/2005, Vol. 52 Issue 16, p. A1-A19, 3p.
[3] From "Disclosure and Damage" by Eaton, Judith, Fryshman, Vernard, Hope, Samuel, Scanlon, Elise, and Crow, Steve in Change, 2005, pp. 42-49.

- External verification that the program or institution meets standards;
- Assists students in assessing differences and similarities among institutions and programs;
- Helps institutions in determining the acceptability of transfer credits;
- Establish criteria for certification and licensure.[4]

The two basic types of accreditation are "institutional" and "specialized" or "programmatic".

- Institutional accreditation applies to the entire institution and is completed by the regional accrediting associations or national accrediting agencies.
- Specialized or programmatic accreditation applies to departments, schools or programs that are parts of an institution and usually occur within institutions that are regionally accredited. Certain professional schools and hospitals are accredited by specialized or programmatic accrediting groups as free standing organizations.[5]

Focus of Paper

Although specialized or programmatic accrediting includes outcomes assessment, this review focuses on the status of outcomes assessments in the accrediting process of the regional accrediting associations.

- Appendix A includes the publications of the regional accrediting agencies that relate to outcomes assessment.
- For the reader's interest, there is a list of all of the accrediting agencies (other than those regional accrediting agencies that are the focus of this paper) recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. They are listed on the ED website and in Appendix B of this paper.

The regional accrediting agencies include:

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education [6]
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education [7]
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, The Higher Learning Commission[8]
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities[9]

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[4] www.ed.gov/print/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation.html, 3/17/2006.
[5] www.ed.gov/print/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation.html, 3/17/2006.
[6] From Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education website at http://www.msche.org/
[7] From New England Association of Colleges and Schools website at http://www.neasc.org/cihe/cihe.htm
[8] From the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission website at http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org/
[9] From Northwest Commission on Colleges and Schools website at http://www.nwccu.org/

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges[10]
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities[11]

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education covers regional accreditation at institutions of higher education in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education covers regional accreditation of institutions of higher education in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, The Higher Learning Commission covers regional accreditation of institutions of higher education in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. They also accredit schools of the Navajo Nation.

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities covers regional accreditation of institutions of higher education in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges covers regional accreditation of institutions of higher education in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities covers regional accreditation of institutions of higher education in California, Hawaii, the United States territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. [12]

The position of the Council of Regional Accrediting Institutions on Outcomes Assessments in the Institutional Accrediting Process

The regional associations have demonstrated increased interest in outcomes assessment over the last decade. In publications of the Council of Regional Accrediting Institutions, outcomes assessments have been highlighted and the member associations have agreed to the following constructs and principles related to outcomes assessment:[13]

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[10] From the Southern Association Commission website at http://www.sac.org/

[11] From the Western Association Commission website at http://www.wascsenior.org/wasc/

[12] From the U.S. Department of Education website at www.ed.gov/print/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation.html, 3/17/2006.

[13] From the Pamphlet: *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Principles for Good Practices. Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2003.*

- *The centrality of student learning in accreditation*
- *Evidence of student learning related to institutional mission and goals*
- *How is the collection and use of student learning evidence related to the achievement of the institution's mission?*
    - *Forms of appropriate evidence may include:*
        - *The fulfillment of institutional purposes (evidence of student learning outcomes directly related to institution's educational goals)*
        - *The processes institutions set in place to evaluate educational goals appropriate to mission, appropriate data collection procedures and the use of data to improve the curriculum and other offerings.*
        - *Effective practices of teaching and learning*
        - *Institutional climate and resources to support student learning (capacity)*
- *The improvement of student learning through accreditation.*
    - *Commissions assist institutions in improving student learning.*
- *Training.*
    - *Commission teams are trained to determine the effectiveness of outcomes assessment in the accreditation process.*

In *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: A Guide for Institutions and Evaluators*, the five (5) student learning principles detail expectations for evidence of student outcomes related to institutional mission, purpose and documentation of the compilation and use of evidence to support and influence institutional changes.[14]

In *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Improving Institutional Practice,* each of the principles is tied to current research studies, best practices in the field, literature reviews and publications that define how reviewers can identify and use existing knowledge bases to determine the effectiveness of institutional practices and policies that support teaching and learning. The publication also includes specific criteria for evaluating student learning (in the appendix). The question format of the criterion enables even novice administrators to hone and fine tune their findings during the accreditation review process.[15] Team members' roles are clarified through examples in the publication, *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Preparing Teams for Effective Deliberation,* Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004.[16]

[14] From the Pamphlet: *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: A Guide for Institutions and Evaluators,* Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004

[15] From *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Improving Institutional Practice,* Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004.

[16] From *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Preparing Teams for Effective Deliberation,* Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004.

Methodology

A review of recent research and articles in the area of outcomes assessment in accreditation was conducted to determine current trends and areas of emphasis in the field. The intent is to determine the current status of outcomes assessment at the regional and national levels as seen through the lenses of the accrediting agencies to assist in determining the potential impact educational policy. The research review was necessary to determine the field's emphasis on outcomes assessment in the accreditation process to highlight consistent areas of concern that are shared with regional accrediting bodies.

Regional accreditation agency websites and publications were reviewed to identify consistency in the approach to outcomes assessment, as agreed upon by the Council of Regional Accrediting Institutions. The national nature of the status of the field could be better determined once these agencies' approaches were analyzed.

Review of the Literature on Outcomes Assessments in the Accreditation Process

In 1993, when this writer advocated the use of federally funded TRIO programs personnel in the accreditation process, few advocates existed for this practice, in part because some of the TRIO personnel were based in student rather than academic affairs.[17]

Today, the academy is more cognizant of the roles of all members of the academic community in support of student learning outcomes. TRIO personnel have advanced from program personnel and directors to chief academic affairs officers, including provosts and presidents. Many account for their early global program experiences with budget, personnel, students, marketing, and proposal writing to their development as multi-task managers responsible for global views of institutional and programmatic effectiveness.

Outcomes Assessments in Program Accreditation

The literature is replete with the use of outcomes data in program assessments. Soundarajan[18] advocates closing the loop by using the data from program assessments to improve programs. In a study conducted in 2000, Hindi and Miller describe a survey they conducted of assessment practices in accounting departments of colleges and universities.[19] Information literacy is assessed in three arenas by Lindauer, Arp and Woodard.[20] They advocate consultation and planning with librarians, as faculty assess

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[17] From "The Varied Roles of TRIO Programs in the Accreditation Process' by Gill, Wanda E., 1993, Speech delivered at the Presidential Breakfast of the Mid-Eastern Association of Educational Opportunity Programs in Alexandria, Virginia, ERIC Database, ED358791.

[18] From "Program assessment and program improvement: closing the loop" by Soundaranjan, Neelam, 2004 in Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, Vol. 29, No. 5, October 2004, Carfax Publishing.

[19] From "A Survey of Assessment Practices in Accounting Departments of Colleges and Universities" by Hindi, Nitham & Miller, Don, 2000, in the Journal of Education for Business, Volume 75 No. 5, pp. 286-90.

[20] From "The Three Arenas of Information Literacy Assessment" by Lindauer, Bonnie Gratch, Arp, Lori and Woodard, Beth, 2004, in Reference & User Services Quarterly; Vol. 44, Issue 2, p. 122-129.

information literacy learning outcomes. Arnold, Kozel & Velarde[21] recommends that programs provide the public with completion rates and attrition rates and identify student outcome competencies, among other things. Bai & Pigott promote the use of assessment portfolios to assess performance in engineering programs.[22]

Research on General Education Curricula

In 1990[23], when Pickering and Bowers wrote about assessing value-added outcomes assessment, applications of outcomes assessment in the student affairs arena and what is needed to make adaptations, they correctly observed that "…without well-defined mission and goal statements, a well-defined general education curriculum, and well-defined curricula in the majors, it will be impossible to determine what is being assessed."[24] They go on to indicate that a positive outcome of assessment is the revisiting of mission and goals statements at both the institutional and program levels. They agree with McMillan (1988) that institutions need to use multiple measures to demonstrate effectiveness.

In a 2002 article,[25] Seybert highlights general education outcomes, transfer outcomes, career and occupational outcomes, remedial and developmental outcomes, noncredit and continuing education outcomes, affective and non- cognitive outcomes at the community college level. To his admission, very few community college outcomes assessment studies address the use of the data and information that is collected. He cites the work of Banta (1999); Banta, Lund, Black and Oblander (1996); and Banta and Associates (1993) as examples of effective uses of assessment data.

Curriculum reform is the goal of assessment in the research of Hubbal & Burt.[26] The authors present a strategic approach with principles to develop, implement and assess a learning centered curriculum.

Research on Helps and Hindrances in Accreditation

In a 1997 study, Banta presents ten principles and advocates removing barriers from outcomes assessment and the use of findings so that institutions can move forward.[27] Of particular note are the barriers to success she highlighted:

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[21] From "Recommendations for Evaluation Accreditation Guideline Outcome Assessment Methods for Accredited Environmental Health Programs in the United States" in the Journal of Environmental Health, 2004, pp.22-26.

[22] From "Assessing Outcomes Using Program Assessment Portfolio Approach" by Boi & Pigott, 2004, in Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education & Practice, pp. 246-254.

[23] From "Assessing value-added outcomes assessment" by Pickering & Bowers, 1990, *Measurement & Evaluation in Counseling & Development*, Jan 1990, *Vol 22*, Issue 4, p0215-222.

[24] From "Assessing value-added outcomes assessment" by Pickering & Bowers, 1990, *Measurement & Evaluation in Counseling & Development*, Jan 1990, *Vol 22*, Issue 4, p.218

[25] From "Assessing Student Learning Outcomes" by Jeffrey A. Seybert, 2002, in *New Directions for Community Colleges*, No. 117, Spring 2002, pp. 55-65.

[26] From "An integrated approach to developing and implementing learning – centered curricular" by Hubbal & Burt, 2004, in International Journal for Academic Development, pp. 51-65.

- Lack of Faculty Support
- Changes in Institutional Leadership
- Changes in Institutional Circumstances
- Limitations of Assessment Tools and Methods
- Insufficient Involvement of Students
- Insufficient Use of Results

In a 1998 study[28], Kimmel, Marquette and Olsen presented an historical overview on the movement to promote assessment of higher education institutions, the role of regional accrediting agencies and colleges of business. At this time, the authors concluded that there were three basic approaches to assessment in the accreditation process, reputation, resources and outcomes.[29] The authors conducted a survey of 300 accounting programs in the United States in 1996 using a 4 page questionnaire. Of those 66 public institutions that responded, 31 had assessments in place. Of those 26 private institutions that responded, 8 had assessment programs in place. Most institutions were collecting data on college gpa (87.9%), job placement rates (70.7%, retention & graduation rates (68.6%), pass rates on certification exams (67.6%), alumni satisfaction surveys (55.5%) and achievements of recent graduates (52.1%). At the time, of those surveyed, only 64% reported English competency assessment testing and 56% reported mathematical competency testing. Only 8% reported competency in a major and 8% reported exit examination in the major and 3% reported exit examination in the Core.[30] The authors concluded that only 42% of respondents reported the use of a comprehensive outcomes assessment program.[31]

Outcomes Assessments Research Related to Institutional Mission

Another outcomes assessment research paper was presented by Burke and Minassians.[32] They examined 29 state performance indicators through surveys responded to by directors of institutional research of community colleges and 4 year institutions in California, Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin. Their survey findings indicate that performance indicators don't reflect the missions of the community colleges they examined; outcomes were far fewer than inputs; leaders of these community colleges had no or little familiarity with the reports and were, therefore, not likely to be used for policymaking on the campus.

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[27] From "Moving Assessment Forward: Enabling Conditions and Stumbling Blocks" by Banta, Trudy W., 1997, in *New Directions for Higher Education*, No. 100, Winter 1997, pp. 79-91.
[28] From "Outcomes Assessment Programs: Historical Perspective and State of the Art" by Kimmell, Marquette, & Olsen in *Issues in Accounting Education*, pp.851-868.
[29] Ibid, p.855.
[30] Ibid, p.861.
[31] Ibid, p.866.
[32] From "Implications of State Performance Indicators for Community College Assessment by Burke, Joseph C. & Minassians, Henrik P., 2004, in *New Directions for Community Colleges*, No. 126, Summer 2004, pp. 53-64.

Research on Design Structure That Focuses on Students

In a 2003 article, Carey & Gregory[33]present and apply a design structure to student outcomes assessment that focuses primarily on the student. In their model, learner characteristics, motivation, active student participation are key to student learning outcomes. Learning environment, course content, learning guidance and content integration are also presented as important elements for course level outcomes assessment. In this article, " Table 1. A framework for course evaluation and revision", relies strongly on learner characteristics in all of its key areas (learner characteristics, learning environment, course content, and essentials for learning).

In a 2006 article, Poindexter[34] argues for the use of outcomes assessment in student life from student recruitment through graduation. The more global view of the processes of recruitment and retention of students is viewed as a task for the entire campus. The design and timeline become critical factors in this study.

Research on
Technology & Outcomes in Accreditation

In a 2001 article[35], Welsh and Alexander of the University of Louisville and Dey of Indiana University Southeast, describe the use of a technology based outcomes assessment program, Quality Measurement System, used to collect data and generate reports at the University of Louisville. The article is important because it describes continuous quality improvement through the use of outcomes assessments based on student, alumni and employer responses. At the same time, university administrators improve internal institutional quality through the planning and budget processes while faculty and departmental chairs and Deans are able to examine and change policies and programs based on hard data. The authors describe external accountability, internal quality improvement, academic program review, academic program data base, and outcomes assessments. This model is one of the few examined for this paper that related changes to the planning and budget processes, this author's main foci of concern.

Articles on Accrediting Agencies As Catalysts For Greater Institutional Emphasis on Outcomes Assessment

In a 2005 article in *Change*,[36] Wergin encourages accrediting agencies to become catalysts for institutional self-reflection that is coupled with action. He further encourages institutions to make their learning goals public.

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[33] From "Toward Improving Student Learning: policy issues and design structures in course level outcomes assessment" by Carey, James O. & Gregory, Vicki L., 2003, in Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, Vol. 28, No.. 3, pp. 215-225.

[34] From "Are colleges Listening to Students?" by Michael C. Poindexter, 2006, in The Journal of the New England Board of higher Education, pp.19-20.

[35] From "Continuous Quality Measurement: restructuring assessment for a new technological and organizational environment by Welsh, Alexander & Dey, 2001 in Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, Vol 26, No. 5, 2001.

[36] From "Taking Responsibility for Student Learning: The Role of Accreditation" by Wergin, Jon F., 2006, in Change, Jan/Feb2006, Vol. 37, Issue 1.

In a 2006 article by Daniel Weinstein,[37] indicates that accrediting institutions are becoming more prescriptive because higher education institutions are not developing quality outcomes assessments.

In a 2003 article[38], Welsh & Metcalf indicate their research findings suggest that administrators are motivated to conduct assessments for internal improvement that lead to initiatives on their campuses which they are involved in rather than requirements for external agencies.

Findings

What do research studies tell us about the use of outcomes assessment in the regional accreditation process?

There are limited research studies in the area of outcomes assessment and accreditation. Most of the large studies that have been completed are for "programmatic" or "specialized" accrediting agencies, many at the community college level. Their findings have implications for all accrediting agencies and could be replicated at the regional accrediting agency level. Findings from the Burke and Minassian study seem to indicate that key institutional leaders responsible for planning and budget and the day-to-day operations are generally unfamiliar with the findings of programmatic accrediting agencies. This suggests there may need to be more of a link between the programmatic or specialized accrediting agencies' use of outcomes assessments and regional accreditation in a more formalized way.

Banta's study needs to be replicated to determine that status of the barriers she highlighted in her study, published in 1997, and new or emerging barriers, some that may be due to technology, that affect the use of student outcomes in accreditation. While there appear to be more computer programs to facilitate the use of outcomes assessments more effectively at the institutional level, their use for institutional change has not been sufficiently documented.

What are the areas of agreement among regional accrediting agencies on outcomes assessments?

The principles agreed upon by all regional accrediting agencies include:

- The centrality of student learning in its mission.
- Documentation of student learning.
- Compilation of evidence.

[37] From "Outcomes Assessment Is Here to Stay, Get Faculty Buy In" by Daniel Weinstein, 2006, in Academic Leader, pp.1-2.

[38] From "Administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities: responses to the 'new accountability' by Welsh, Jon & Metcalf, Jeff, 2003, in Journal of Higher Education Policy & Management, pp. 183-193.

- Stakeholder involvement.
- Capacity building.

What resources do regional accrediting agencies use to support outcomes assessments in the accreditation process?

Resources used by regional accrediting agencies to support outcomes assessments in the accreditation process include workshops and training opportunities, experts in the field as team members publications, websites, films, best practices research findings.

Regional accrediting agencies vary in the design and use of their websites. All sites have basic contact information, workshop schedules, association member lists and commission members lists. None of the sites provide lists of colleges and universities that have lost accreditation, so it's difficult for the public to validate institutional claims on their accreditation status.

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges provided a substantial list of recent books and other publications on campus based outcomes assessment that are used as resources for reviewers in the accreditation process. They even provide other pertinent website links and films to assist reviewers.

The Middle State Association Commission on Higher Education and the others provide workshops on outcomes assessment to clarify their expectations of reviewers.

While the staff of accrediting agencies have made a major effort to keep abreast of changes in the field, to include outcomes assessments, it would be useful to have staff aboard with expertise in the use of outcomes assessments in the budget and planning processes as well as in the area of curriculum development.

What areas could benefit more from an analysis of outcomes assessments but are currently somewhat limited?

No research studies were identified that relate budget to outcomes assessment in the accreditation process. It would be useful to identify personnel and other resources used to collect and analyze data, recommend institutional changes based on the data, observations and other information to improve campus courses and services based on institutional mission.

Similarly there is a need to study changing institutional missions over time for national trends at the 2 year community college, 4 college and university levels. It's not clear from the limited research studies how the missions of these levels of schools have evolved over time as a result of changes in student populations, life style expectations, and instructional delivery systems.

Conclusions

Lawmakers have placed more emphasis on policies that emphasize transparency of the accreditation process to include an increased emphasis on student outcomes. Research to determine how effectively accrediting agencies are holding member institutions to task for accounting for outcomes assessments in the development and dispositions of graduates is greatly needed. With new responsibilities on staff at the regional accrediting agency level, there may be a need for more personnel to facilitate the work. While volunteers have successfully spearheaded efforts for reform in regional accrediting agencies, more staff or shared staff across accrediting agencies, even at the Council level, would benefit the field.

Researchers interested in regional accrediting agencies can learn from program based research on outcomes assessments in accreditation and generically. More faculty involvement including awareness of the importance of outcomes assessment for not only promotion and tenure issues but for program growth and development is greatly needed. Planning and budget issues impact the very nature and size of faculty in most areas of the academy.l

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Appendix A

Publications, Resources on Outcomes Assessment
Submitted by the
Regional Accrediting Agencies

Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions Publications

(Provided by Lynn E. Priddy, Ph.D., Director, Education and Training of The Higher Learning Commission)

- Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions: Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Principles for Good Practices, *Adopted by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2003.*

- Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: A guide for Institutions and Evaluators: Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004.

- Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Preparing Teams for Effective Deliberation: Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004.

- Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Improving Institutional Practice: Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004.

Publications of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Related to Accreditation and Outcomes Assessment

- Assessing Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness: Understanding Middle States Expectations, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA, 2005.
- Advancing Student Learning: Highlights and Summary of Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA
- Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA, 2003 (slated for revisions next year).
- Team Visits: Conducting and Hosting An Evaluation Visit, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA, 2006.
- Characteristics of Excellence in higher Education: Eligibility Requirements and Standards for Accreditation, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA, 2002. (reprinting is soon to be released with changes in standards 7 and 14 that bring them in line with what is in "Assessing Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness").
- Designs for Excellence: Handbook for Institutional Self-Study, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA, 2002. (This will be replaced by a new document called ***Self Study***… later this spring.)

Schedule of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Spring-Summer 2006 Assessment Workshops and Institute

A Focus on Standards 7 & 14 in Characteristics of Excellence

- Student Learning Assessment for Beginners Workshop
  - March 30, New York, NY
  - June 21, Albany, NY
  - August 21, San Juan, PR
- Assessing Student Learning in General Education Workshop
  - March 31, New York, NY
  - August 22, San Juan, PR
- Institutional Effectiveness for Beginners Workshop
  - March 31, New York, NY
  - August 22, San Juan, PR
- Student Learning Assessment Institute
  - June 12-13, Philadelphia, PA
- Integrated Planning and Assessment Institute
  - June 14-15, Philadelphia, PA

The Higher Learning Commission, A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

- "Commission Statement on Assessment of Student Learning" excerpted from Chapter 3: The Criteria for Accreditation, 3-4-2, The Handbook of Accreditation, The Higher Learning Commission.
- "AQIP's Expectations on Assessing Student Learning", excerpted from Academic Quality Improvement, The Higher Learning Commission, 2005.
- "Commission Academy on Assessment of Student Learning", forwarded by Lynn Priddy, Ph.D., Director of Education and Training, The Higher Learning Commission of NCA, March 2006.
- "Commission Guidance on Determining Qualified Faculty" forwarded by Lynn Priddy, Ph.D., Director of Education and Training, The Higher Learning Commission of NCA, March 2006.
- "Chapter 3: The Criteria for Accreditation", excerpted from the Handbook Assessment, Student Learning and Teaching Guide Statements embedded, forwarded by Lynn Priddy, Ph.D., Director of Education and Training, The Higher Learning Commission of NCA, March 2006.

Western Association of Schools and Colleges Resources

(Forwarded electronically on March 23, 2006 by Dr. Cameron Wu Cardona)
[CWuCardona@wascsenior.org]

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WASC Website Resources

- **Western Association of Schools and Colleges**: www.wascsenior.org

The Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities is launched its redesigned website in June 2005. The navigation on the new website is by user group: institutional representatives, evaluator teams, and the public. The following is a sample list of resources found on the website that are most relevant to institutional representatives.

- 2001 Handbook of Accreditation
- Assistant Chair / Team Writer Position Description
- Capacity and Preparatory Review Timeline
- Commission Advisory for Comprehensive Visits
- Commission Advisory for Special Visits
- Data Exhibits for the Capacity and Preparatory Review
- Data Exhibits for the Proposal, Special Visit, and Progress Reports
- Educational Effectiveness Approaches
- Educational Effectiveness Case Studies
- Educational Effectiveness Frameworks and FAQs
- Educational Effectiveness Timeline
- Evidence Guide
- Financial Report Format
- Guide to Attending a Commission Meeting
- Progress Report Format
- Proposal Guidelines
- Proposal Review Committee Evaluation Worksheet
- Special Visit Guide for Institutions
- Special Visit Timeline
- Substantive Change Resources:
    - 2005 Substantive Change Manual
    - Principles of Good Practice in Overseas International Educational Programs for non-US Nationals
    - Good Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs
    - Statement of Commitment by the Regional Accrediting Commissions for the Evaluation of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs
    - Substantive Change Proposal Template

    - Substantive Change Proposal Evaluation Worksheet
    - Substantive Change Site Visit Team Report Format
- Summary Data Form

Resources: Independent WASC Related Websites

- **BYU–Hawaii:** http://w3.byuh.edu/about/pair/accreditation/index.html
- **Point Loma Nazarene:** http://www.ptloma.edu/AcademicAffairs/WASC
- **University of San Francisco:** http://www.usfca.edu/acadserv/academic_affairs/prog_rev_accred/wasc.html
- **UC WASC-Related Web Sites:**
- **Berkeley:** http://education.berkeley.edu/accreditation/
- **Davis**: http://wasc.ucdavis.edu/
- **Santa Cruz**: http://planning.ucsc.edu/wasc
- **San Diego**: http://accreditation.ucsd.edu/
- **CSU WASC-Related Web Sites:**
- **Chico**: http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/vppra/wasc/
- **Fresno**: http://www.csufresno.edu/portfolio/
- **Long Beach**: http://www.csulb.edu/projects/wasc/
- **Monterey Bay**: http://csumb.edu/academic/accreditation/
- **Pomona**: http://www.csupomona.edu/~wasc/final_report.htm
- **Sacramento**: www.oir.csus.edu/WASC
- **San Bernardino**: http://wasc.csusb.edu/
- **San Diego**: http://wasc.sdsu.edu/
- **San Francisco**: http://www.sfsu.edu/~acadplan/accreditation.htm
- **San Jose**: http://www.sjsu.edu/wasc/
- **San Luis Obispo**: http://www.academics.calpoly.edu/wasc/

WASC Resources: Film

- **Declining By Degrees: Higher Education at Risk (2005)**
- *A commentary on the increasing difficulties that challenge our national commitment to provide every qualified student the opportunity to attend college. The film examines both the promise and the peril in higher education today.*
- **A Private Universe (1994)**
- *A powerful documentary on student learning, produced by the Science Media Group of the Science Education Department at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.*
- To order, contact the Annenberg Foundation/Corporation for Public Broadcasting partnership at 1-800-LEARNER or www.learner.org

Appendix B
National Institutional and Specialized Accrediting Bodies Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education by Category

Alphabetical Listing by Type of Agency

- Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
  - Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine*
- Allied Health
  - Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools*
- Art And Design
  - National Association of School of Art and Design, Commission on Accreditation*

*Title IV Note: Only free standing institutions or colleges may use accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs

- Bible College Education
  - Association for Biblical Higher Education, Commission on Accreditation
- Business
  - Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools*
- Chiropractic
  - The Council on Chiropractic Education, Commission on Accreditation**

Title IV Note: Only private, non-profit junior & senior colleges of business & private, non-profit free standing institutions offering graduate business & business-related programs at the master's level may use pre- accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs

**Title IV Note: Only free standing institutions or colleges may use accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs*

- Christian Education
  - Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, Accreditation Commission
- Continuing Education
  - Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training*
- Cosmetology
  - National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences

Title IV Note: Only vocational institutions, per this agency, may use accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs

- Distance Education and Training
  - Distance Education and Training Council, Accrediting Commission*
- English Language Program
  - Commission on English Language Program Accreditation**
- Funeral Service Education
  - American Board of Funeral Service Education, Committee on Accreditation***

*Title IV note: With the exception of the Distance Education Demonstration Project, entities accredited by this group are ineligible for Title IV programs participation.

**Title IV note: Entities are ineligible for Title IV programs participation if accredited by this group.
*** *Title IV Note: Only free standing institutions or colleges may use accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs*

- Health Services Administration
  - Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education*
- Law
  - American Bar Association, Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar**
- Liberal Education

American Academy for Liberal Education***

*Title IV note: Institutions accredited by this agency are ineligible for Title IV programs participation.
**Title IV note: Only free standing law schools accredited by the ABA are eligible for Title IV programs.
***Title IV note: Only institutions of higher education accredited by this group are eligible for participation in Title IV programs.

- Marriage and Family Therapy
  - American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education*
- Massage Therapy
  - Commission on Massage Therapy Association
- Medicine
  - Liaison Committee on Medical Education*

*Title IV Note: Accredited institutions ineligible for Title IV programs participation.

- Midwifery Education
  - Midwifery Education Accreditation Council*
- Montessori Teacher Education
  - Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education, Commission on Accreditation*
- Music
  - National Association of Schools of Music, Commission on Accreditation, Commission on Non-Degree-Granting Accreditation, Commission on Community, Junior College Accreditation*

*Only free standing institutions may use accreditation by this agency to be eligible to participate in Title IV programs. See ED website for other possible restrictions.

- Naturopathic Medicine Education
  - Council on Naturopathic medical Education*
- Nuclear Medicine Technology
  - Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology*
- Nurse Anesthesia
  - Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs**
- Nurse Midwifery
  - American College of Nurse-Midwives, Division of Accreditation*

*Title IV Note: Accreditation by this agency does not establish eligibility for Title IV program participation.
**Title IV Note: Only hospital based programs and free standing institutions accredited by this agency may establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs.

- Nurse Practitioners
  - National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health, Council on Accreditation*
- Nursing
  - Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education*
  - National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission**
- Occupational Education
  - Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology
  - Council on Occupational Therapy
  - American Occupational Therapy Association, Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education*

*Title IV Note: Accredited institutions are ineligible for participation in Title IV programs.
**Title IV Note: Diploma programs and practical nursing programs not located in a regionally accredited college or university may use accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs.

- Opticianry
  - Commission on Opticianry Accreditation*
- Optometry
  - American Optometry Association, Accreditation Council on Optometric Education*
- Osteopathic Medicine
  - American Osteopathic Association, Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation**

*Title IV Note: Institutions accredited by this group are ineligible for participation in Title IV programs.
**Title IV Note: Only free standing schools or colleges of osteopathic medicine may use accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV programs.

- Pastoral Education
  - Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., Accreditation Commission*
- Pharmacy
  - Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education*
- Physical Therapy
  - American Physical Therapy Association, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education*

*Title IV Note: Institutions accredited by this organization are ineligible for participation in Title IV programs.

- Podiatry
  - American Podiatric Medical Association, Council on Podiatric Medical Education**
- Psychology
  - American Psychological Association, Committee on Accreditation*
- Public Health
  - Council on Education for Public Health*

*Title IV Note: Institutions accredited by this organization are ineligible for participation in Title IV programs.
** Title IV Note: Only free standing schools or colleges of podiatric medicine may use accreditation by this agency to establish eligibility for participation in Title IV programs.

- Rabbinical and Talmudic Education

- Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Schools, Accreditation Commission

- Radiologic Technology
  - Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology*
- Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
  - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology**

*Title IV Note: Only hospital based radiologic technology programs and freestanding radiologic technology institutions may use this agency's accreditation to establish eligibility for participation in Title IV programs.
** Title IV Note: Accredited institutions ineligible for Title IV participation.

- Teacher Education
  - National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education*
  - Teacher Education Accreditation Council, Accreditation Committee
- Theater
  - National Association of Schools of Theatre, Commission on Accreditation**

*Title IV Note: Accreditation through this agency does not establish eligibility for Title IV program participation.
**Title IV Note: Only freestanding schools or colleges of theatre may use this accreditation to establish Title IV program eligibility.

- Theology
  - Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools*
- Veterinary Medicine
  - American Veterinary Medical Association, Council on Education**
- Other
  - New York State Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Education

*Title IV Note: Only freestanding institutions, colleges or seminaries of theology may use this accreditation to establish Title IV programs eligibility.
** Title IV Note: Accreditation by this agency doesn't establish Title IV programs participation eligibility.